

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

1-49. (Cancelled)

50. (Currently Amended) A nerve retractor assembly for manipulation of the spinal neurostructure, the assembly comprising, a retractor blade; a retractor body adapted for unobstructed view of the retracted area wherein the retractor body is provided with a channel adapted to engagingly receive the retractor blade to maintain the retractor blade in a predetermined position relative to the retractor body.

51. (Previously Presented) The nerve retractor assembly of claim 50 wherein the retractor body further includes at least one supporting member mounted thereon for attaching a retractor pin, and a retractor pin attached to a first one of the at least one supporting member for fixedly positioning the retractor blade relative to the neural structure.

52. (Currently Amended) The nerve retractor assembly of claim ~~50~~ 51 wherein the at least one supporting member defines a hollow tube for receiving a the retractor pin.

53. (Previously Presented) The nerve retractor assembly of claim 50 wherein the channel is a concave channel.

54. (Currently Amended) The nerve retractor assembly of claim ~~50~~ 51 and further including a second retractor pin having a handle and a shaft disposed between the pin and the handle and slideably received in the at least one supporting members.

55. (Currently Amended) A nerve retractor assembly for manipulation of the spinal neuronstructure, the assembly comprising:

a retractor body ~~adopted~~ adapted for ~~undistracted~~ unobstructed view of the retracted area, the retractor body including ~~at least one~~ a first supporting member and a second supporting member, each of the first supporting member and the second supporting member mounted ~~thereon~~ to the retractor body and adapted for attaching a first and a second retractor pin, respectively, and

~~at least one~~ the first retractor pin being attached to the first supporting member and the second retractor pin received for movement within the second supporting member.

56.-62. (Cancelled)

63. (New) The nerve retractor assembly of claim 50 wherein the retractor blade is received in the channel for slidable movement towards a distal end of the channel.

64. (New) The nerve retractor assembly of claim 63 wherein at least a portion of retractor blade and at least a portion of the channel are in slidable contact during said slidable movement of the retractor blade toward the distal end.

65. (New) The nerve retractor assembly of claim 55 further including a retractor blade having a shape complementary to a shape of the retractor body.

66. (New) The nerve retractor assembly of claim 55 further including a retractor blade, the retractor body defining a channel configured to receive the retractor blade.

67. (New) The nerve retractor assembly of claim 66 wherein the channel is formed between the first and second supporting members.

68. (New) The nerve retractor assembly of claim 66 wherein first and second supporting members are adapted to engage the retractor blade to maintain the retractor blade within the channel.

69. (New) The nerve retractor assembly of claim 66 wherein the retractor blade is received in the channel for slidable movement towards a distal end of the channel.

70. (New) The nerve retractor assembly of claim 66 wherein the retractor blade is fixedly engaged with the retractor body to maintain the retractor blade in a predetermined position relative to the retractor body.

71. (New) A retractor assembly, comprising:
a retractor body having a support portion having a shape configured to provide an unobstructed view of a surgical site, the retractor body further including at least one support member;
a retractor blade having a shape complimentary to the shape of the support portion, the retractor blade held in predetermined position relative to the retractor body by the at least one support member.

72. (New) The retractor assembly of claim 71 wherein the retractor body includes first and second ones of the at least one support member and a channel formed between the first and second support members.

73. (New) The retractor assembly of claim 72 further comprising a first pin receivable within a first opening in the first support member and a second pin receivable within a second opening in the second support member.

74. (New) The retractor assembly of claim 73 wherein the second pin includes a handle and a shaft extending therefore, the shaft comprising the second pin received in the second opening in the second support member.

75. (New) The retractor assembly of claim 74 wherein a distal end portion of the second pin is forcibly inserted into a tissue for maintaining a position of the retractor assembly relative to the surgical site.

76. (New) The retractor assembly of claim 71 wherein the retractor body defines a channel configured to slidably receive the retractor blade.

77. (New) The retractor assembly of claim 76 wherein at least a portion of the retractor blade and at least a portion of the support portion of the retractor body are in slidable contact during sliding movement of the retractor blade within the channel.

78. (New) The retractor assembly of claim 76 wherein the retractor blade includes a stop to limit sliding movement of the retractor blade within the channel.

79. (New) The retractor assembly of claim 71 wherein the retractor blade includes a distractor tip sized and shaped for insertion into an intervertebral space for distraction of the intervertebral space.